

EVIL HEART, UNBELIEF, DEPARTING FROM GOD.

J. M. BOWMAN.

"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Heb. 3:12.

These words of inspiration are a part of one of the several warnings in this epistle, against sloth and the danger of being content with stopping at "first principles, failing to receive the promise," even "after ye have done the will of God," and apostasy. Indeed the whole purpose of the epistle seems to lead Christians out of their babyhood in Christ by giving grounds for boldness and confidence in view of what Christ is to us, and seeks to do and be in us, and the certain faithfulness of God to his promises.

Surely a very large part of the professed Christians of the present time are in very sore need of such leading and teaching. So many are content with a mere profession, and then settle down, wholly giving themselves up to earthly things. To be sure they attend church, and many have all of the forms of Christianity, and yet all of the weakness of a child.

Our warning is "Take heed." Indicating that yet there is need that we give still deeper attention, for God speaks, and that we should more carefully search our hearts for they may be evil.

"Take heed, lest ye depart from the living God." The author draws the line of contrast very sharply between that that was imperfect and that which is perfect; the priesthood after the order of Aaron, and that after the order of Melchisedec; that which is "after the law of a carnal commandment," and that which is "after the power of an endless life." In this, he would have us keep before our thought the fact that it is the *living God* that we are to have in view; and that in our neglect and apostasy we are departing from Him. Is it not painfully true with so many, that they forget God in their zeal for their favorite church, or their loyalty to certain doctrines, or even allow the word of God to take the place that should be God's in their life, and in this very way make of no effect the church and the doctrines, and the word which God has spoken, for none of these are God, but are to lead us to God.

"Lest there be an *evil heart of unbelief*." It is the heart that God deals with. The very mainspring of man's life. Many now have very great reverence for great intellect. It is the heart. Depend upon it too, that unbelief has its root in an *evil heart*. Sin hardens and dries up the life.

Glenford, O.

Church News.

ADDITIONAL.

MARION CHURCH.

Dear readers of the EVANGELIST, as pastor of the Brethren church at Marion, I wish to say, that the work there is moving along as well as could be expected under existing circumstances.

At our last appointment we reorganized the Sunday-school. The attendance at church is good, and the attention very good. There had been a retarding influence from a small rebellious element in the church, which I hoped might be subdued and brought into line, by patience and kindness; but finding this would not work, we had to resort to firmer and more effectual means, so that the church is rid of the annoyance and has a brighter prospect for success in the future.

The one great hinderance to success in church work at Marion is the church debt. And we had hoped that the appeal I made to the Brethren churches, asking only for the small sum of one dollar from each member who could pay that amount, we would at least secure a sufficient amount to pay off the delinquency and aid the brethren at Marion to carry the debt-making the regular monthly payments as they become due. But up to the present time there has not been a dollar received by the Marion church through that appeal.

This, perhaps, is my fault. Instead of naming a suitable person at Marion, to whom the money should be sent, I named brother H. S. Sprinkle of Huntington, who resides from 60 or 65 miles from Marion, and 6 miles from his post-office, making it inconvenient for him to give this matter the timely attention it should have. Hence two monthly payments have matured since we made our appeal, and as we did not have the money that had been sent in to meet those payments, two fines of two dollars and eighty cents each were assessed. This would have been saved if the money would have been sent direct to Marion. And on the last Saturday of this month there will be another payment due and another fine assessed if they are not prepared to pay.

We have, therefore, changed the arrangement, and brother Simon Rader of Marion has been appointed to receive all money donated to help pay the Marion church debt, in response to our appeal. He is an excellent and responsible brother, a deacon and trustee of the Marion church. It is his business to pay out the money coming into his hands on the debt and take receipts for the same. And he will also receipt through the EVANGELIST for all money sent him by the churches. All, therefore, who will kindly aid in this

noble work, will hereafter send their donations to Simon Rader, 632 R. R. avenue, Marion, Ind., and I assure you it will be properly applied and accounted for.

I see by Brother Sprinkle's report in the EVANGELIST, that some who had written me that they were soliciting money in their congregations for Marion church, have not yet sent it in. Please send it to Brother Rader as soon as you can.

It seems that some misunderstood my appeal. A brother from an adjoining congregation said to me in Elkhart a few days ago, that when the matter came up in his church, it was understood that if a thousand dollars were not raised within a few weeks, the church would be sold. This is a mistake. It don't all have to be raised at once. If three hundred dollars in addition to what Brother Sprinkle has received, could be sent in between this and September 1, and one hundred of it as soon as possible, this would enable them to meet the most urgent demands and secure to them a donation of two hundred dollars from our Quaker friend, the balance they owe him for the lot on which the church stands.

After that, if the balance of the thousand dollars could be received at the rate of from ten to fifteen dollars per month, with what they could do themselves, the debt could be easily paid. But to withhold your donations until the thousand dollars are pledged, would bring disaster upon the Marion church certain.

On the last Saturday of this month there will be three payments due, then, according to the rules of the Loan association, they can foreclose the mortgage. On January 14, when I took charge of the Marion church, they were ready to foreclose that day, and would have done so had I not promised to immediately raise money and pay off the delinquency. But in order to do this we begged money, donated all we could, the sisters society gave what they had in their treasury, then I loaned them all the money I had, \$26, and I got \$63 from the Mission Board, and still there is some to be raised.

Then I made my appeal to the brotherhood to give one dollar each, until one thousand dollars were donated, a plan so simple and easy that almost every brother and sister could come to their relief, and have the pleasure and honor of helping to save a sister church that is in distress and unable to save herself.

I make one more *earnest* and *last* appeal to you my dear brethren, can you not give \$1 each? And will you not do so, rather than that the Marion brethren should lose their church, and that all the labor and money spent there should be a total loss? If you will, then we will take fresh courage and labor on, if you can not, there is nothing left for us to do but to disband and quit. Hoping that our Heavenly Father will direct our hearts and lives, I am fraternally,
J. A. RIDENOUR.